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It can hardly be denied that the smaller nations came off badly at the Conference, and that their disgust greatly tended to undermine that public confidence in the League which is essential to its support. The delegates of these smaller countries complained, with much color of reason, of "Conferential Tsarism." They were told in so many words that the decision of all important questions lay with the states that had the most soldiers. Belgium was somewhat shabbily treated, Roumania was offended and made recalcitrant, Poland was trifled with. Other small states were ignored. Shall we take the behavior of the Conference as a measure of what the League will do? Why not?

And what has been the net result? Dr. Dillon's reply to this question sums up in concentrated bitterness the force of five hundred pages of narrative and analysis: "Whatever the tests one applies to the work of the Conference—ethical, social, or political—they reveal it as a factor eminently calculated to sap high interests, to weaken the moral nerve of the present generation, to fan the flames of national and racial hatred, to dig an abyss between the classes and the masses, and to throw open the sluice-gates to the inrush of anarchist internationalities."

In all literature only a few have ever attacked an institution or a political course of action more subtly, more energetically, or more effectively than has Dr. Dillon in his inside story of the Conference.

WALT WHITMAN: THE MAN AND HIS WORK. By Leon Bazalgette. Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Company.

American appreciation of Whitman has always been helped by foreign appreciation, and even now the time is not past when Americans need arousing, and may be aroused, to a larger recognition of Whitman's significance. While one would not think of the poet of *Leaves of Grass* as especially akin to the French genius, the excellent work done in English literature by French scholars in recent years leads one to hope for much in M. Bazalgette's book.

So far as the setting and atmosphere are concerned, M. Bazalgette's account of Whitman might have been written by an American brought up in the neighborhood of Brooklyn. There is hardly a false—by which one means in this case an un-American—accent in the whole work. An old friend of Whitman's might have written it, so thoroughly has the author steeped himself in his subject, so perfectly has he caught not merely the spirit of Whitman but the intimate quality of his surroundings. And if an imaginative description of Long Island, written somewhat after the fashion of Taine—"region of winds and waves. region rude and little attractive, impress of a splendid desolation"—sounds a little queerly to American ears, the fault is no doubt quite as much with our too-familiarized imaginations as with the author's art. It would be difficult to find another passage in the whole book that in the least disturbs our native feeling as to the things that we know most about. Well informed, and adjusted to all the aspects of his subject, M. Bazalgette has written what is in all points as good a short life of Whitman as a reasonable person could wish for.

As for appreciation, there is this to be said: that what is "cosmic" tends almost inevitably to be vague, and that insistence upon Whitman's great idea and upon his great qualities tends somewhat toward "damnable iteration." This tendency, M. Bazalgette has not altogether escaped. "The entire man was marked with a great natural dignity, vulgar familiarities did not belong to him. Without even taking into account the exclusive privacy of his life, of the feminine attachments of which no one intimate with him received the secret, this communal and fervent being who pushed freedom to the baring of himself in his poems, had a strong tendency to be secret. He did not permit certain locks to be opened." This is not mere eulogy; it is really explanatory; yet pages and pages of this sort of comment upon no great variety of themes becomes—must one say it?—a trifle tedious. M. Bazalgette is often illuminating, seldom penetrating.

There is, however, more than once an effectiveness of statement that is almost as good as profundity. "Such," says the author in summing up his chapter upon "The Man of Crowds"—"such was in its general character and seen only under a limited number of its aspects *the enormous education of this uneducated man.*" And on critical points the author is almost always right. He rejects with scorn the notion originated by Bucke, that at a certain hour Whitman received a sudden illumination and became endowed with a new and superhuman sense, the cosmic consciousness. "All the greatness of the poet protests against such a postulate, and his formidable realism forbids an esoteric explanation." Of Whitman's supposed debt to the philosopher of Concord, he writes: "To say that Whitman is a differentiated product of Emerson's philosophy is to declare that under another climate the elephant could spring from the deer or the bison from the peacock."

Whatever may be the defects of this volume in respect of an ideal short account of Whitman—and Whitman more than some men of equal genius calls for a long and detailed account—Bazalgette's *Whitman* will add to the fame of the poet and will give Whitman-lovers keen enjoyment. The total effect of the work upon an originally indifferent spirit may be considerable. It stimulates and revives drooping interest, creates new interest. Little more can be required.